

AN
IMPARTIAL DEFENCE
OF THE
ESTABLISHED CHURCH:

IN WHICH
ITS CONNECTION WITH THE STATE IS CONSIDERED;
IN ANSWER TO DOCTOR PRIESTLY.

WITH
OCCASIONAL REMARKS

ON THE OBSERVATIONS OF

MR. PAINE AND MR. BURKE.

*Est modus in rebus, sunt certi denique fines,
Quos ultra citraque nequit consistere rectum.*

HOR.

D U B L I N:

PRINTED BY W. CORBET, NO. 57, GREAT-BRITAIN-STREET.

1792.

1609/3264.



AN

IMPARTIAL DEFENCE

OF THE

ESTABLISHED CHURCH.

IF the various opinions which agitate the minds of men were to be confined, in their effects, to themselves alone, few would be induced to trouble themselves about what they write or think: but as these operate on society in proportion to the genius and abilities of the authors, if directed to dangerous ends, it then becomes every good citizen to point out their tendency, and counteract their designs: we conceive the late productions of Mr. Paine and Doctor Priestley,—two men eminent in the literary world, to have been of this stamp: had they

attached themselves solely to the defence of the just rights and liberties of mankind, we should have read them with unalloyed pleasure : but when we perceive them actuated by early imbibed *prejudices*, directed against that form of government in Church and State, which we have been accustomed to revere and admire, we must lament the indecent warmth with which they have been urged, and repel the assault with such remarks as our reason and judgment, as far as they go, can furnish us with.— One would think that these gentlemen should at least have afforded us the indulgence they claim themselves ; if we are in error, they should have respected our prejudices in compliment to the source they spring from, instead of treating them with abusive heat ; we derive them from a Constitution that has been the admiration of surrounding nations for a long series of years ; they are the product of a soil that has been for centuries the head quarters of Liberty : the contrast between us and them is eminently striking, and very differently affects our common country ; bred in her bosom, they would tear from their illustrious parent a part of her existence ; but we would wean her
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from her faults with the tender soothings of filial affection: *they* are attached to Republican principles, *we* glory in that mixed form of government from whence flows the happy poise which prevents any part from preponderating, or aggrandizing itself at the expense of the rest: we look on them as so many centinels set on each other, but all united in the general task of watching over our liberties: we cling to it the more closely from the recollection of the fatal consequences that attended the triumph of one estate over the remainder; besides it was established by the general consent of the nation, and it is only from superior numbers that the sense of the people can be derived, therefore no minority can have a right to alter a frame of government adopted by the approbation of the majority. Was the constitution of a country to be varied according to the opinions or caprice of every Sect, which philosophic speculation or distempered fancy may give birth to, mankind would be involved in an inextricable chaos of disorder and confusion; the system of to-day would be swallowed up and destroyed by the theory of to-morrow, and the mania of reformation would

thus consign to the same grave both private happiness and public prosperity. Having laid down these general principles, it follows, that we cannot be accused of a wish to promote disunion, when we only defend what we are already in the quiet possession of, and which esteeming essential to our freedom, we consequently hold dearer than life itself. Whatever effects a controversy of so disagreeable a nature may produce, we lay them entirely at the door of those who seek to disturb our repose. The drift of their writings is plain and obvious; they are a mixture of unfounded assertions combined with shining truths: they represent a system of liberty grafted on wild speculation, but the stock is too crabbed to afford nourishment to such a tender scion in a British soil: the stately plant which we find assimilated to our climate, and already flourishing in vigorous beauty, we will not be persuaded to root out, in order to transplant it into a Republican hot-bed. It is from considerations of this nature, that the author of these pages has been induced to obtrude his sentiments on the public; he is the more encouraged in the resolution by knowing that they correspond with those of almost every intelligent person



person he converses with: he feels a general love for mankind unbiassed by any *religious distinction*, and he solemnly declares that he is actuated by no motive but the public good; conscious as he is that he can claim no merit but that of upright intention, it is thence he must derive an apology for his want of ability in the present essay: if he does any injustice to the gentlemen whose sentiments he presumes to arraign, it is truly undesigned; it was with reluctance he entered on the disagreeable task: he highly respects their talents, but deplores their misapplication: as to one of them, he will take but little notice of his doctrines; he is not now bound by any responsibility to this country; though we should suppose it no easy matter to get rid of the deep impression of a first love: the parent, who suckles a child at her maternal bosom, hangs with fond delight over the pleasing task; though emancipated from her jurisdiction, a reciprocity of sentiment ought to actuate the latter, and gratitude for past benefits interpose her veil of heavenly fabric, between the faults of the former and the filial eye: may such be the sentiments that will still inspire Great Britain and America!

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but I wander from my purpose ; yet who can refuse to turn a little aside, when beckoned to the devious path by the inviting hand of fraternal affection.

IN commenting on the doctrines of the other gentleman I shall confine myself to those that strike me as reprehensible, and shall therefore begin with his remarks on religion as connected with the State: as to French revolutions and opinions we have nothing to do with them farther than, that as men—as a generous and polite people, we earnestly wish liberty, prosperity and happiness to our Gallic neighbours: but we are not bound to follow a similar line of conduct, when no similar necessity exists: freedom is not new to us; therefore of all people we are most unlikely to be too precipitate, or to crush it, like a bird in the hand of an admiring child, in the eagerness of our grasp.

THE Doctor goes back to the early ages of christianity; we shall follow him there, and remark that the Christian Emperors certainly had no occasion to allow any salaries to the Clergy; for,

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as he observes, they were amply provided for: but the religion was nevertheless an *established* one, which he allows when he says the *State protected its property*; whether that was acquired by the munificence of private persons, or the gift of corporate bodies, it equally afforded an affluent support to the Clergy, and was as much an establishment as if it arose from tithes, as at present; estates well supplied the place of the latter, and if a Clergyman is protected in his estate, what better establishment can he wish for? or what greater privilege has any citizen? nay, what greater at this moment has any Bishop? it is beyond even that of Parliament, which is but an accessory right, granted them for the purpose of representing the Church and protecting its rights in the general assembly. Our ancestors thought Religion so serious an object, that they conceived it well entitled to a representation in the Wittena Gemote, whatever the complexion of the question may be at present. What purpose then, does the observation with respect to Italy and Sicily answer? except to shew that in those countries the Clergy are paid in lands instead of tithes,

tithes, and that consequently they are infinitely better off.

THE DOCTOR defines an established Church, a Church defended and even regulated by the State which at most but barely connives at other religions; his definition may be proper enough, but what has the situation of the primitive Church to say to the present? the Pagan religion was the established Church of those days, until supplanted by the light of Christianity, which the votaries of the former embraced by degrees; and let us suppose for argument sake, that the Christian world is in error, and that a light of a more perfect nature was vouchsafed to it; it is natural to imagine that the former would be forsaken, and the latter adopted; consequently it would become the Established Religion; an whole people may change their persuasion once a year, the last embraced becomes established the moment its property becomes protected: these matters are easily comprehended, but what have they to do with the question? or how far do they go to prove the inutility of an Established Church? its non existence they cannot prove, which seems

to be what the Doctor aims at. He terms the civil establishment of religion an innovation; but this we conceive to be a palpable mistake, and flatly contradicted by his own acknowledgement already recited; nor in our opinion does he serve the cause he espouses when he descends to scurrilous invective, and applies to the Established Church such opprobrious terms as those of a *fungus*, a *sloth*, and a *glutton*; an indecency of language of which it is to be hoped he will some time hence be ashamed.

MR. BURKE is certainly right in asserting that religion is the basis of civil society, for reasons I shall take occasion to mention; it is asked will religion feed or cloath us? we say it ultimately does both, for without it we cannot have law, and without law we may be deprived of both: laws may be multiplied ad infinitum, yet they must all depend on the law of *testimony*, and let men be once brought to such a state of mind as to regard an oath only as a matter of convenience or formality, no person's life or property can be safe; consequently they may be liable to be deprived of both food and cloathing. The Doctor should

find out for us some other test to supply the place of an oath before he can persuade us that there is no connection between religion and civil society, or what is the same thing—the State: it may be objected that the law can annex a punishment to the violation of truth; so it does, but how many cases are there, where none but God and the heart of the witness can know the truth? and then, without religion, what becomes of the case in question? or what other obligation can we find out that will operate on the human mind, or induce it to the acknowledgement of a truth which may perhaps be contrary to its temporal interest?

INDEED Mr. Burke's distinction of a religious establishment being more particularly necessary in democratical, than other States, seems a little incomprehensible: nor do we know how any State can exist without one, let its nature be what it may: society, however modified, cannot be supported without laws, and these derive their efficacy and energy in a great degree from the moral duties inculcated by religion; and whether one, a few, or many rule the State we do
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not perceive what difference can arise to the general system, which can only be affected by a dissolution of those ties which bind man and man together—soften down the asperities of human nature, and give to society its brightest charms—stamp on it those virtues which lie above the reach of earthly tyranny, unattainable by any coercive institutions, and which attuned even the rugged breast of a Dionysius to those finer feelings which dignify and enoble the soul, and elevate it far beyond the pomp of power, and the rank of Kings; let the gloomy republican—the agrarian spirit that would reduce to one promiscuous level every rank and every distinction, and bloated with all the arrogance of proud humility (the most dangerous emotion that ever warped the soul) would yoke the gentlest virtues and the brightest intelligence with the petulance of presumption and the insolence of ignorance—that would legalize the fees of the meanest offices, and yet degrade the Ministers of God's word to the lowest state of dependant beggary—when from the very nature of their profession, and the striking importance of its duties there is no set of men in the State better entitled to its care, or

more deserving of a decent independance; let him, I say, explain if he can, how those amiable virtues can be so well attained as by religion, and whether the source from whence they are derived is not intimately connected with the very *vitals* of the State, and consequently entitled to every protection it can bestow.

We are also inclined to think that Mr. Burke is, apparently at least, guilty of an inconsistency when he seems to sanction the opinion, that posterity is to be bound by the laws of any preceding period; the present generation must certainly be the best qualified to judge and decide for itself; the affairs of the World are and necessarily must be in a continual state of fluctuation and change, and what is fit and expedient at this day may prove directly the reverse at another; but it is useless to expatiate on an idea that carries its own refutation along with it; his antagonist, Mr. Paine, has not neglected to lay hold of so obvious an advantage; yet by simplifying the question a little, we may perhaps bring the ideas of both gentlemen a little nearer to each other: the law or Constitution has ordained that the King shall
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reign on certain conditions specified in his coronation oath; so long as he performs these conditions, and fulfils the compact entered into with his people, they cannot depose him, for, that would be to regulate their conduct by force and caprice, and not law, which is inconsistent with the general principles of order, and which consequently can never derive a sanction from any combination of numbers: in this sense the King is not beholding to the choice of his subjects, for if he were, the monarchy must be elective, and not hereditary, which it is by law; but the moment he violates his coronation oath, a dissolution of allegiance follows of course, because the latter was only promised to a due observance of the former, and the people are thenceforth justified in making a new choice; this is the construction which we are willing to believe Mr. Burke himself would affix to his expressions; it is almost impossible to think a man of his genius and abilities could mean any other, or that he could suppose the English nation ever abdicated their rights, at the Revolution, on any other ground.

WE wish we could say as much in his favour on the occasion of another observation he makes use of, but that impartiality which we profess to maintain, will not permit us to pass over silently the regret with which he views the demolition of the Bastile, softened down to the milder appellation of the King's Castles; he seems to forget the dreadful purposes to which those horrid mansions were appropriated; there Tyranny sat, clothed in terror, its footstool watered with the tears of Despair, and Torture and Death its supporters, while Liberty lay enchained and expiring beneath its feet: but surely every man who feels the inestimable value of freedom, will rejoice with France in the destruction of those hated walls; and earnestly do we implore of Heaven that such Castles may never sadden the face of the British empire, or frown on the liberties of its sons: were there no other circumstance but this alone to immortalize the assertors of Gallic freedom, this alone would be sufficient to secure them a conspicuous place in the list of fame: nor can we avoid lamenting the weakness and instability of the human mind, when even the elevated genius of a Burke could give birth

to a sentiment which sullies his well-earned fame, and plucks a leaf from the verdant honours which encircled an head grown grey in the service of the state.

DOCTOR PRIESTLEY observes, that the civil establishment of religion is so far from making it respectable that it produces a contrary effect; but if what has been already said carries any weight the reverse must hold true; and we think that were the Clergy without property and merely elective, they would be reduced to as debasing situations as they can possibly be at present: the elective foundations in parishes and great towns afford a strong case in point. Can we behold a Clergyman driven to the necessity of soliciting the favour and support of almost the lowest classes of society, men whose gross ignorance, not to say partial and influenced choice, disqualify them from electing to the meanest office in the country, without feeling a great degree of indignation? or does this exhibit him in a respectable point of view? In country parishes it is to be feared that friendship and connections would operate to the exclusion of superior abilities,

ties, though the most moderate talents and negative virtues should be the object of their choice; exceptions there would certainly be, but in general we may suppose that interest would in a great measure govern, though exerted on a different field.

THE Doctor quotes America, in order to shew the advantages arising to a state from the absence of an established religion, and applies the example to England; but an attentive observer will perceive that the two countries are very differently circumstanced in this respect: the people of America consist almost entirely of a yeomanry, of men who are not sufficiently *enlightened* to disregard religion, consequently they cheerfully contribute to support their Clergy in every Sect; but in these countries, it is universally allowed that Religion is on the decay, and Free-thinking (I mean the term according to its common acceptance) so rapidly encreasing, that were it unsupported by the state, there is reason to apprehend that religion and its teachers would starve and expire together, and then let speculators say what they will national prosperity must decline in proportion: when no longer bridled and restrained

strained by a sense of religious duty, men would run into every latitude and enormity that vice and luxury could give birth to, and its last retiring beam would leave the human breast a receptacle of folly and a chaos of obscurity: it cannot be denied, that the practice of the moral virtues are essentially requisite to the welfare of society, and their decline has fatally marked the decline and fall of every empire. There are many crimes for the restraint of which the clearest-sighted Legislators have been unable to frame laws; and here religion interposes its powerful aid, and firmly fixes the key-stone which was wanting to the arch: it speaks to the heart from the inmost recesses of the soul, and its still small voice arrests the thought that aims at the secret crime. How many crimes would be committed in despite of the law, though armed with all its terrors, were it not for the influence of religion? Like the Spartan thief, a man would plume himself on the profits of successful villainy, and dexterity and secrecy constitute his only care: from religion then we derive our best security against that sink of luxury, and depth of vice into which, what we call polished nations, are still more deeply

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wading, and are spinning the fatal web, which, however enticing its silken appearance, is to enclose and become the tomb of their political existence. A multiplicity of laws plainly argues, that a State is already far gone in this *refined* decay, and when it ceases to be connected with religion, its dissolution may be quickly expected: the hinge on which all law turns, as I have already observed, is lent by religion; Property, Safety, Life, depend on that Sacred obligation called an oath: the divine laws form the groundwork and sources of the human, on that solid foundation, the noble edifice is raised; they receive a degree of veneration and awful respect from this connection that no human powers could give them; how then can Doctor Priestly, or any man in his senses, seriously say that there is no connection between religion and the State? when the safety and welfare of the one, consists solely in the cultivation and protection of the other: the State cannot now be reformed by Spartan discipline: the money of Lycurgus cannot now be substituted for the various exchanges of the present day; nor have we, I repeat it, any antidote left to the effemina-

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nacy of manners and habits of voluptuousness, which uniformly accompany unbounded commerce and refined arts, but that of religion : indeed was there a certain prospect that men would always continue equally animated by a just sense of religion, it would be of no great consequence to its teachers whether there was any settled provision made for them by the State, or not ; the voluntary contributions of pious zeal would probably afford them a sufficient competency ; but as this is not the case, it is to be feared that all those—and they constitute no inconsiderable number, who are but slightly affected by religious impressions, would contribute but a very small proportion towards the support of the Clergy ; some perhaps none at all ; the burthen would consequently fall too heavily on the shoulders of the well inclined part of the community, who might justly complain of a partial distribution, nay perhaps tired and incensed at so invidious an exemption, they or a great part of them might copy the example, and let the Clergy and religion fall to the ground together ; nor is it by any means a just or fair comparison in the Doctor when he quotes his own sect and those of other dissenters, as affording am-

ple support to their Clergy in the voluntary way ; experience has proved, and will for ever prove, that religion, let it be of what kind it may, thrives on persecution ; suffering in the cause of Heaven a man conceives to be such an unequivocal proof of his sincerity, as cannot fail of establishing for him a particular interest there ; therefore the more he feels himself cramped in his religious persuasion, the more strongly he becomes attached to it, consequently the better he will pay its professors ; but leave him in the full, free, and undisturbed possession of it, and, such is his unaccountable nature, that he will too readily become lukewarm in his attachment, perhaps fall off from it and adopt another : let us suppose that the Doctor's sect was to change places with the established religion, it is an hundred to one but its zeal would cool in proportion to its expansion, and that other sects would branch forth from its body : from these consequences, added to its numbers, it would find it necessary to establish a fixed and determinate support for its Clergy. If I pay three pounds yearly to my parish Clergyman either in the produce of my land, or by voluntary contribution from my purse, it amounts to
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the same thing; the only difference is that the one is obligatory, the other not; and I can feel no disagreeable sensation in being bound to it, except I have it in contemplation to withdraw my quota; or, as my pleasure or caprice shall dictate, reduce it to nothing or next to nothing: I can readily agree with him in substituting some other mode of payment in lieu of tithes, when an unexceptionable plan can be struck out; though I would have it a fixed and certain income sanctioned and protected by law, but never would I, like him, reduce the Clergy to so abject a state as that of beggars dependent on the casual charity of individuals. The National Assembly of France did not thus treat their Clergy, and it cannot be denied but that they were as free from bigotry as any set of men whatever, and as well inclined to clip the clerical wing: no man respects that enlightened body of men more than I do; yet I am at the same time of opinion that they have gone rather into an opposite extreme in some particulars; I can easily allow the propriety of the resolution that cut off the overgrown redundancies of Church property, and reduced to a reasonable standard the immense incomes

incomes of its dignitaries: but I am far from thinking they have dealt equitably by the Parochial Clergy: they have not left them a genteel independance, which I conceive a good Clergyman is as well entitled to as any other member of society: these are not primitive times; and even piety in the garb of poverty will not be much respected at the present day: that ardent and glowing zeal which prompted the first christians to despise and cast away all property, and depend entirely on casual support, was then essential to their mission, but is now unnecessary: hospitality, benevolence, charity, are the true characteristics of religion, and what every Clergyman should in a reasonable degree be enabled to exercise, because to him his parishioners look up for instruction, by example as well as precept, and always expect to see him personify the virtues he applauds and recommends from the pulpit. Now whether twelve or fifteen hundred livres a year will enable him to do this, is what I cannot easily believe; nor do I think he should be confined to a mere subsistence; there is no profession which requires a greater expence of *time* and *money* in order to fit
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a man for its duties, than this; by it he is precluded from bettering his circumstances, or exercising any species of industry: his mind, if possessed of suitable principles, becomes attuned to every feeling that Benevolence suggests, Charity consecrates, and Heaven delights in. He would fain approve himself the friend and brother of mankind, but alas! weighed down by the scanty extent of a narrow pittance he cannot give a scope to the effusions of humanity, and can only afford to Distress a sigh—to Misery a tear. Any man possessed of the milk of human kindness, will grant that this is as cutting a situation as the philanthropic breast can be well reduced to, and will allow it to be unfit for a Clergyman above all others. These particulars considered, may it not be asked with a great degree of confidence, whether more than any other man he ought not to be placed in easy circumstances, and relieved from those pinching wants—the inseparable attendants of a poor income, which are ever borne with difficulty by a generous mind.

We may also remark, that if a liberal maintenance is not held forth to religious professors,

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no gentleman will willingly place his son in the Church, or go to the expence of such an education as is necessary to fit him for the purpose, which otherwise applied, would enable him to obtain affluence in many lines of business; the sacred office must be consequently filled by the lowest classes of the people, whose vulgar habits and stinted means disqualify them for so important a duty, and are only calculated to disgust their parishioners. When the latter once come to behold their Clergymen with dislike or contempt, farewell to any good which can possibly be derived from their instructions, even if possessed of the ability to instruct; religion of course must decay, for the people become far less susceptible of its impressions, when cooled in their attentions, by being forced to despise its teachers: every man's experience, without the aid of much argument, will serve to convince him of the truth of this observation; and though in the Established Church many men of worth and abilities only fill the station of Curates, at a poor salary, yet hope still encourages them with a view of preferment, and prompts them to exert their talents in order to render themselves deserving

serving of an higher station ; take away this hope, and you dry up the stream at its source.

WE shall here take an opportunity of noticing the unfounded and malevolent abuse which the Doctor on every occasion throws out against the Clergy of the Established Church : if, taking Temper for his guide, he intended to end his literary career at the temple of Moderation, he has totally mistaken his way, and lost his amiable conductor : he exhibits to us the appearance of a troubled wave, surfaced with oil, and might have been doubly dangerous had he been less unguarded. All men are not equally good, and the best and most enlightened profession is not exempt from unworthy members ; but we may venture to say, that there are as many good characters to be found amongst the Clergy of the Church of England as in that of any other persuasion whatever ; and, in Ireland at least, notwithstanding the Doctor's assertion, as little exacting in the payment of their dues ; so far from it, that they seldom, if ever, get what they are entitled to : but until the State shall think proper to make some other provision for them, they

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will hardly be persuaded to give up all in order to please the Doctor, and turn mendicants at the door of a Dissenting Dives.

STRONGLY as our author contends for an elective Clergy, we still think the present mode the best that can possibly be adopted, and by no means subject to those inconveniencies he complains of. By the Church Canons, if a Clergyman is guilty of immoral conduct, or neglect of duty, on due complaint and proof, he may be deprived or suspended by his Ordinary as the case shall require; consequently if an improper person has the care of a parish, it is either the fault of the parishioners who will not prefer the complaint, or of the Bishop who does not pay it due notice; of the latter we believe no instances can be adduced; and as to the former, they cannot complain of want of redress when they will not take such obvious means of procuring it. We are free to acknowledge, it may have happened, that Bishops have occasionally given preferments more to interest than merit: the amiable sensibilities of friendship may sometimes direct the distribution of Episcopal favour:

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we cannot, nor would we wish to divest them of the feelings of men : but, however popularity might settle on the mitred crown, or nestle in the violet robe, did we know of any circumstance inconsistent with the character, we would not hesitate to declare it, nor would we spare an error, though it should take shelter beneath a sleeve of lawn. Had the Doctor pointed out to us, and aimed his shafts at any species of unwarrantable conduct, instead of attempting to ward, we would assist him to urge the blow : as we write for no party, we would not hide the faults of any as far as they strike us ; but we will maintain that when the episcopal duty is properly attended to, (and in justice we must say that we know of no public function better discharged) there is not a more advantageous method of governing a church : a man is set apart whose sole business it is to inspect the conduct of the Clergy ; to see that they perform their duty with care and propriety, and who is doubly armed with the power of punishing immoral, and rewarding virtuous behaviour in those over whom he presides, and who consequently has every mode of regulating their conduct as far as fear

can influence, or hope agitate; and what more powerful incentives to the human mind, I confess I know not. But we allow that there is no person more deeply committed, for if he does not direct them with a skilful hand and a watchful eye, he is accountable to his Flock, to the State, and to his God, more than any other man whatever. There is indeed a circumstance which we consider as a real grievance, viz. Lay Presentations, and for this plain reason, because the person who disposes of them has no responsibility, and rarely considers of merit in the object of his choice: besides the intent of those gifts is so perverted that they are now reckoned private property, and sold like any other commodity, which is an unpardonable and senseless innovation on the ecclesiastical establishment, and crept in at the Reformation, together with that other unreasonable encroachment, Lay Impropriation: this arrangement totally excludes merit, for it is not the most sterling virtue, but the weight of the purse that carries preferment, though we should imagine that the former is the only coin that ought to pass current in this species of traffic.

THE Doctor says the salaries of the Clergy in his 'church do not *half maintain them*, but that there are *never wanting men of independent fortunes who devote themselves to the Ministry*; we heartily congratulate him and them on this religious turn of mind in the better sort of his flock, and freely confess that herein they have the advantage of the Established Church, whose wealthy members are not so fond of dedicating themselves to its service, especially in such a disinterested manner; however we have seen some dissenting Ministers who, as far as we could understand, had no private property, consequently were obliged to live on public contribution; what that was we know not, but by the Doctor's account they must have had an hard time of it: the Apostles themselves thought that the labourer was worthy of his hire, and that he ought to be maintained by the Church, though our modern Apostle would give him but half fare. But let us not be too precipitate, perhaps it is with the laudable design of mortifying the inward man, and keeping down the lusts of the flesh; yet we fancy the poor sufferers would willingly take their chance of compassing this desirable end by other means, and
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in the mean time eat and drink as much as other reasonable people : besides, are none to have a spiritual call but men of fortune ? or supposing the divine impulse to act equally on a rich man and a poor one, will our blessed Saviour reject the latter, and prefer the former because he has money ? we apprehend this was not the case in the primitive Church, nor is it now : virtue and ability are not confined to wealth, and many amongst the lower ranks, *if they can procure the necessary education*, may possess both in a sufficient degree to qualify them for the work of the Ministry, and it would be cruel to debar them of their pious choice, and the community of the benefit of their talents, because they have not independent fortunes : there are also many genteel families who can give their sons a liberal education, and no more ; young men of this description, and of a sober sedate turn of mind, may prefer the Church, and enter on the Ministry with the hope of a decent maintenance by it, without any impeachment of their principles, or any *unjust and ill founded reflection* on themselves or Christianity.

THE Doctor tells us that the *character* and *conduct* of his Ministers render them far more respectable than those of the Established Church; if this be the case, and that the Dissenters are so numerous as he states them to be, it is really a shame for them to shew so indifferent a sense of their merit as only to half maintain them: his observation—*independent of the private fortunes which many of our Minister's have*, plainly implies that some have not, who therefore must fall under the above disagreeable predicament, so that the Doctor has unwittingly arraigned his sect of a want of justice, humanity, and gratitude, and pronounced a very severe libel on the Dissenters, as well as a very heavy and unjust one on the Established Clergy by his comparison; what! are there none of the latter respectable in their character and conduct? no merit, no virtue to be found out of the dissenting pale? the Doctor is indeed a dissenter with a vengeance; he monopolizes all perfection; the star of dissenting virtue illumines the whole Christian horizon, and the glimmering light of the Established Church is absorbed and lost in its superior blaze: but we trust that the Eastern luminary, which we look
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upon as the true guiding star to happiness, sheds for us as bright a beam, and will point out to us as clearly the road to Heaven, as it does to him : besides we have one advantage over him, we do not deny to any their just portion of merit, and have a just diffidence of our own ; so that if Charity be the test of true religion, we are at least in as good a way as he is.

WE do not entirely agree with Mr. Burke in his opinion that *in consequence of the Bishops in France becoming elective, nothing of science or erudition will henceforth exist in the Gallican Church.*

—We are more apprehensive of this consequence arising from the narrow incomes of the parochial Clergy ; they are the persons who, as the Doctor rightly observes, produce in general the most learned works, and so they ought, for they are equally as well educated, and far more numerous ; but to enable them to do so, it is highly requisite they should be placed in easy circumstances : Poverty is no friend to Genius and Literature ; besides if we mistake not, the clerical duty is very heavy in France, and a man who is every instant called out to the performance

mance of one office or other, can have very little time left for learned pursuits: the scantiness of his income precludes him on the other hand from paying an assistant, and also obliges him to give those moments he can spare to the little attentions requisite to the confined state of his private affairs. If the French Clergy assert the *Rights of Man*, on their part, so far as to shake off the senseless trammels of celibacy, a circumstance perhaps not far distant, they will be still more disagreeably situated, and the National Assembly must either increase their salaries, procure some of our doctors *men of fortune* for the Ministry, or see their country disgraced by clerical poverty and distress. But we do not apprehend that their Bishops are subject to similar inconveniencies, the incomes allotted to them are sufficient to maintain them in learned ease, though not luxurious pomp, which we take to be a requisite by no means essential to a Clergyman. As to the learned productions of the Dissenting Clergy, we do not desire to detract from their merit, but we rejoice in every production of genius, let it come from what quarter it may; yet we do not see why this must necessarily be a difference between them

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and the Established Clergy, because the former can be dismissed at the will of their congregations. Would the Doctor mean to insinuate that a good Minister who performs his duty with the most blameless assiduity and unaffected piety, should nevertheless be turned out if incapable of producing works of genius, and that therefore his flock should not approve of him; this would be the utmost height of cruelty and ingratitude, and what we think the Doctor himself would shudder at being guilty of; yet his observation plainly admits of this construction.

THE Doctor winds up his chapter with affixing unbelief on the Established Clergy, the most odious stigma that can possibly disgrace a Christian: there was nothing but this wanting to compleat the curious character he so liberally bestows on them: this has finished the climax; and while his production has existence, will remain an indelible stain on its ungenerous author. It is worthy of remark, that he says in the same breath—this disbelief exists among them, though he has no opportunity of knowing it; this is an explosion of the paradoxical kind, and shews that the

the existence is in the Doctor's brain: he has worked himself into a political furor that has involved his senses and abilities in a mist of contradictory nonsense: that disbelief *is* in existence amongst the Established Clergy he has known; that it still exists among them he does not know. —Credat Judeus, &c.

IN proceeding through the publication before us, we might perhaps become susceptible of indignant emotions at its unparalleled effrontery were we not presently checked by the consideration of that contempt which every reasonable and unprejudiced person will unite in bestowing on factious impotence: the language which reproves unqualified insolence must of necessity be tinged with a degree of asperity suited to its magnitude; though that coolness of temper which can alone qualify an observer to decide on the merits and opinions of men, may remain unruffled and inviolate: whatever materials the Established Church is composed of, we trust it will never have any thing to fear from the Doctor's machinations; and we believe, to use his own words though with a different application, that

its own evidence and excellence will support it; and that should the State itself be overturned, the people will of themselves, and from predilection reinstate it in every essential right and reasonable privilege: nor is it a matter of such anxious concern to us, whatever he may think, under what title, or from what fund its maintenance shall be upheld, since we are well assured that it must be coeval with our excellent Constitution, and that the ruin which involves the one must annihilate the other; to prove this assertion farther we have only to enquire whether amongst the variety of sects which exist in these realms, there is any one so congenial to it as ours? beneath its grateful shade the flower of British liberty blooms with undying beauty; there reclined in safety, the Monarch, the Peer, the Commoner, enjoy its fragrance, and admire the various charms of its *blended* tints: it is not the manchineel of the religious or political wood; no poisonous drops distil from its branches to wither and consume any of the estates recumbent at its foot; can we say as much for every other? I hope we may; I did believe we might; but the inflammatory writings of the present day have bred a
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degree of scepticism—of reluctant suspicion in my mind that I cannot hastily dismiss: when I see one man (who, though newly a foreigner, I cannot help considering as an Englishman,) arraign with malignant levity the conduct of our generous ancestors in calling King William to the British throne, and establishing the succession in the illustrious house of Brunswick: when I behold another, a subject and an inmate of this injured country presuming to cite as an example worthy of our imitation a *Revolution* subversive at a single blow of two parts of our Constitution: prophesying the downfall both of *Church and State*; and threatening us with *impending and unknown calamities* which, he says, *our obstinacy may put it out of his power to prevent* in case we do not attend to his representations and remonstrances, and gratify him by overturning both, for I will not separate them; telling us that *a dissolution of the fatal alliance between them* is still the object of his most *ardent wishes*; I say when I hear such daring and criminal language, I fancy myself on the eve of those dreadful times when slaughter and devastation desolated the British isles: when the murder of their King swelled the black catalogue

logue of national crimes; and fanaticism bathed his cruel fangs in regal blood. And are we to suppose that a sect whose leaders openly avow their hostile sentiments with such intemperance of language, can be favourable to our Constitution? or can we believe that when one of them asks with the most marked contempt, what business any nation has of so insignificant a state puppet as a King; (for that is the plain English of his expressions,) that the regal part of our Government is not with them an object of irreconcilable aversion? too surely it is, and the abolition of monarchy is written in broad characters on the front of almost every page of their works: these are the quacks who under the specious appearance of philosophy and reason would administer their empiric remedies, and purge away the health of our country—who to gratify their interested views, and Utopian projects would overturn a form of rule that has stood the test of ages; and which, though sometimes bent by tyranny, has ever resumed its native energy, and proved as favourable to liberty, as inimical to every arbitrary principle whether proceeding from a monarchic, aristocratic, or democratic source;

source: shall we then to indulge an undistinguishing spirit of reformation, give up those blessings which we know and feel, and which the approved trial of experience has sanctioned with deserved applause; and, yielding to rude innovation, pull from our Constitution one of its main supporters, that designing men may stride to their desires over the prostrate fabric, and feast their eyes with a view of the noble ruin? Perish the thought! we will not, I trust, *equalize* our King into a shadow, and under pretence of the Rights of Man, reduce him to the despicable pageantry of mock Majesty; no! we will preserve him in all his just rights and privileges; we will enable him to repel with efficacy and vigour every attempt which either of the estates may in the hour of madness or folly make on the liberties of the people; and we will maintain him in that degree of splendour and generous veneration which the representative of the majesty of a great empire ought to be displayed in. We will not deprive the British lion of his teeth and fangs, and leave him the laughing-stock of every puny beast of the forest; but we will guide him so as that they shall only fall on the enemies of our liberties, and

and crush them into nothing. If that noble tree which produces the golden fruits of freedom, should in the luxuriant exuberance of its growth put forth any tainted or useless branches, let them be pruned with the attentive care of a skilful gardener ; but let us not permit the biting axe of faction to pollute with unhallowed touch the venerable trunk ; yet if those ill-omen'd birds whom it permits to shelter amidst its friendly boughs prophecy aright, the true sons of Liberty, embattled around it, will lose it but with their lives, and expire beneath its tremendous fall.

LET it not be imagined, that it is with a view of aspersing any set of men, whatever their religious tenets may be, that the writer thus gives a loose to his thoughts ; such an imputation he utterly disclaims ; and sincerely does he hope that the principles imputed to particular demagogues are confined to them alone, and that the body of the people satiate their political thirst at a clearer spring : but it is the duty of every honest citizen to guard his countrymen against insidious designs, which are the more dangerous

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as proceeding from beneath the cloak of perverted philosophy and assumed moderation, a garb which every unprincipled politician knows how to put on when it suits his purposes, and can as readily lay aside when the end is answered: nor will he pursue his proposed disquisition farther than once more asserting in general terms, that there is no religious persuasion more favourable to the British Constitution than that of the Established Church; at least if we take our opinion from every example and event hitherto afforded by the historic page, or from the inflammatory productions of the present *Æra*. Men may boast as they please of their philanthropy, and in all the energy of well-turned periods and beautiful imagery descant on the advantages of universal toleration, and universal freedom; our ideas shall keep pace with theirs, and hail with undissembled applause the generous and benevolent principle: but when from amidst these flowers of eloquence and reason, we perceive a ray darting from the deadly scales of the hidden serpent, it is our duty to drag the lurking monster into light, and display him in his native deformity.

It is strange that men cannot wield their weapons of defence in the cause of freedom, without aiming their blows at what the greatest part of their fellow subjects consider as intimate and material parts of her system; nor can there be a stronger proof of the high degree of existence it is in amongst us, than the impunity attending such violent attacks: it is a bad mode of defence against the imputations they disclaim when, instead of repelling them with the modest ingenuousness of injured worth, they desert the proper field of argument, and strike into the crooked paths of faction and disorder: the intemperate controversial spirit will often find itself in this predicament; the blush of anger sometimes works itself into the pale horrors of distorted rage; and the insidious design will flash through the gloom that is thrown around it, like the coruscations of the forked lightning from the bosom of a sable cloud.

THE DOCTOR says there is danger threatening the established Church; however that may be, *we clearly see that the method he has adopted has no tendency to increase but only to lessen it: he has*
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opened our eyes to views and opinions which we imagined were long since consigned to pages mouldering into dust on the shelf of oblivion : the old adage of—*divide et impera*, which he recommends with a sneer, we detest and despise : we renounce all *jealous bigotry* : we wish to give a *common interest*, and a *general bond of union* to all our fellow citizens ; but the applications of any *part* of them must be made in a very different manner from *those before us*, e'er they can possibly be attended to : the Altar of success is erected in the temple of British liberty, but they cannot be wafted there, if borne on the pinions of *arrogance* or *disaffection*.

IN Ireland, a repeal of the test act followed the dutiful behaviour, and peaceable demeanour of the Dissenters there ; it was not given to the rage of extorting violence, or the malignant effusions of pens dipped in gall ; no threatening clouds shed a gloom on the countenance of requisition ; no storms sat blackening in the rear of non compliance ; the question was unfettered by any system of partial policy, or religious bigotry,

and consequently was crowned with the success it deserved.

THE DOCTOR tells us that had we admitted him to an equal participation of civil rights, he might have thought less of his religious ones; here indeed he may claim the merit of candour; here the cloven foot is displayed without reserve; as to the latter, we have no desire of interfering or interrupting him in them; and he owes his exclusion from the former solely to principles which we deem hostile to our Constitution; let him once prove a dereliction of these, and we will venture to predict that exclusion will follow them: he smacks his lips at the view of the loaves and fishes, but surely it would not be fair that he should attain the enjoyment of this now forbidden fruit when he would seek to blast the hand that gave it to his wishes; it is this circumstance, and not religion, that bars admission: it is his political, not his religious sentiments, that we find fault with: indeed as to religion he does not seem to be very precise; according to him the Clergy of every persuasion are an useless set of men; and every master
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of a family may very well take this office on himself: this is a capital method of getting rid at once of ecclesiastical burthens; and though there should swarm as many sects as heads of families, and religion grow a perfect hydra, yet this confused jumble of a priestly Babel would be amply made amends for by the total abolition of clerical dues; Hail happy Spirit of Reform! which casts forth such meteors of illumination on the political sphere, in order to light us to that blessed degree of toleration which tolerates away all religion; and, making every man his own King and Priest, helps him forward to that pristine state which he possessed before the noble savage degenerated into society, and gave up the precious liberty of doing mischief, for the sake of the paltry advantages to be derived from monarchy and priesthood.

It is somewhat extraordinary, that amidst the applause and admiration lavished by these gentlemen on the French Revolution, they have omitted taking notice of the particular establishment of a religion, which the National Assembly has effected to all intents and purposes, by appointing

pointing the public maintenance of the Romish persuasion in exclusion of all others : they should have extended their philanthropic efforts thither, and have remonstrated on such a glaring infringement on those rights which it professed to restore and maintain : we have monopolized all their admonitions ; but such a partial dispensation of advice, argues an attention to personal interest inconsistent with professions of general benevolence,

THE storm which the doctor tells us is approaching, and is to level in the dust both Church and State, we hope only lours on his own brow : we give him credit for his good intentions, and are forced to believe that, were he to direct it, his whirlwind of reformation would produce dire effects indeed : whenever that great crisis of affairs, a National bankruptcy approaches, it will certainly be ruinous to numbers ; a temporary stagnation of commerce, must unavoidably ensue ; but the active principle cannot be destroyed ; it will rise like a phoenix from its ashes, and flourish into regenerated vigour : it is even a question with many, whether this formidable

formidable crash would not prove salutary in the end ; it would operate on the National credit like a renewal of its lease, which it must be confessed is, to all appearance, not very remote from a close ; and we cannot refuse acquiescing in opinion that another expensive war would force it to a surrender of its present tenure ; indeed this was a prevalent idea previous to the late war, but the stupenduous wealth of England disappointed the prediction ; yet in the nature of things it is impossible but the dreaded event must happen, however the Nation will again obtain credit, and that much sooner than at present, in the same degree that a man will prefer lending his money on the security of an unincumbered estate, rather than of one already deeply mortgaged : a National bankruptcy can scarcely be the effect of choice or fraud, but of pure necessity ; its security will then, *ceteris paribus*, probably last for a couple of centuries more, which is as great a length of time as any creditor can desire, and equal, on any scale of purchase, to a lease for ever. The landed interest, and the lower ranks of people must be great gainers by the event ; the consequent

quent abolition of taxes would encrease their means of expenditure perhaps thirty per cent. ; and as they constitute the mass of the people, they would prove a bulwark against any commotion which the grief and despair of the sufferers might give birth to ; however we hope the completion of this prediction is yet far distant : come when it will, it does not follow that our Constitution is to expire at the moment of its birth—whatever specks cloud its beauty, like spots on the Sun, they are not radical, but only float on its surface, and obscure it occasionally. Pure as that great luminary is, it is not free from blemish, neither is it given to imperfect man to produce perfection : but the system of our liberty has nothing to do with our distress ; it is not what that of France was ; we have no despotism to overturn ; no Bastile to demolish ; we may repair any part of the majestic structure without taking down the whole ; nor is there any fault in it which we cannot see as clearly by the light of prosperity, as we could possibly do by the gloom of adversity ; consequently if reformation be wanting, it is not necessary that we should be ruined in order to effect it : men are not so well qualified

lified to become good Legislators when their passions are afloat, and their feelings exasperated by distress, as in the cool moments of dispassionate ease ; therefore I would never willingly entrust the modelling of a Constitution to such a juncture, were not its errors of such a nature as otherwise to preclude all possibility of amendment, as was certainly the case in France: but if by this great crisis our Government is to be bettered on the same scale, devoutly as the Doctor wishes for such a consummation, we shall look on it as a dreadful one indeed ; and great as his knowledge in State chymistry may be, we will not readily give up two parts of our Constitution to the experiments of so prejudiced an artist ; he and his fellow-labourers have let us into their sentiments without disguise ; and we perceive with regret that, as to their part at least, there exists a necessity for some laws productive of restraint on inordinate desires.

To conclude, we deny that it was simply for the purpose of guarding the Church that laws and tests were framed : it was to guard the State, prevent disaffected persons from being put into a

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capacity of disturbing it : we anticipated with fond delight that happy period when every class of citizens would be distinguished only by their zeal for the general good—when laws and tests would expire with the necessity which gave them birth ; and distrust or jealousy no longer obscure a single feature of the public countenance : with more than mortal speed the opinions of men were hastening to this glorious end—the spirit of fraternal love was all abroad—the inhabitants of celestial bliss were rejoicing at this mortal type of their own excellence ; and they must, they will rejoice ; surely Heaven will not suffer the designs of a factious few to blast the beauteous prospect opening fast on our sight, like the breaking dawn of a delightful morning ; like that, the great idea fills the breast with a degree of rapture ; it is the joy of reason, the extacy of benevolence. Fellow citizens of every description, we call on you to cherish it ! we call on you to exert your united efforts in the cause of man—in the cause of Heaven : do not suffer yourselves to be deluded by the specious reasonings of those who, under the colour of natural rights, point a deadly wound

wound at the bosom of your Constitution : spurn with indignant contempt every insinuation that militates against the public peace ; and your grateful country will undoubtedly in due time reward you with every privilege in her power to bestow : the banner of discord which has so often scattered ruin and dismay around, has been broken and trampled in the dust : O ! never let it be again upreared to shed its baneful influence on your happy land : strike it at once from the sacrilegious hand that should presume to seize it ; and shew that you have no part in those *rump* politics that under the appearance of freedom and toleration would curse you with democratic tyranny, and hurl your Monarch from his throne.

A Member of the Established Church.

F I N I S.



